

Message Text

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14

ACTION ARA-10

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9497

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMCONSUL BELIZE

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCSO CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 4488

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ES, PGOV PFOR PBOR BH GT

SUBJ: SALVADORAN ASSEMBLY EXPRESS ITSELF ON BELIZE?

1. SUMMARY - THE SALVADORAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PASSED A STRONGLY WORDED RESOLUTION ON OCTOBER 29 IN SUPPORT OF GUATEMALA'S CLAIM TO BELIZE, AND CONDEMNING THE UK'S "UNWILLINGNESS," TO RELINQUISH TITLE TO THIS "VESTIGE OF COLONIALISM" IN LATIN AMERICA. ALTHOUGH PASSED WITH NO RECORDED VOTES AGAINST IT AND WITH THE SIGNATURES OF MANY OPPOSITION DEPUTIES, THE RESOLUTION STIRRED A SPIRITED DEBATE AFTERWARDS BETWEEN A FEW LEFTIST MEMBERS AND THE GOVERNMENT PARTY (PCN) LEADERSHIP. THE FORMER CLAIMED THE DECLARATION IGNORED THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE BELIZAN POPULATION. THE LATTER SOMEWHAT CONFUSINGLY SAID: (1) THE MEASURE WAS A CONDEMNATION OF COLONIALISM AND DID NOT REALLY GET INTO THE QUESTION OF EVENTUAL CONTROL; (2) CONFIDENTIAL

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IT DID HOWEVER ATTEST TO THE VALIDITY OF GUATEMALA'S JURIDICAL AND HISTORICAL CLAIM; AND (3) THOSE WHO SPOKE OF "SELF-DETERMINATION" WERE IN OBVIOUS ALLIANCE WITH FIDEL CASTRO, WHO SAYS THE SAME THING. AN ASSEMBLY DELEGATION WAS NAMED, AND DEPARTED IMMEDIATELY FOR GUATEMALA, TO PRESENT THE RESOLUTION TO PRESIDENT LAUGERUD. - END SUMMARY

2. THE ASSEMBLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION ON OCTOBER 29, AFTER NO OFFICIAL DEBATE, WHICH STATED (UNIMPORTANT SECTIONS OMITTED;) "CONSIDERING:

(1) THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT ALL VESTIGES OF COLONIALISM DISAPPEAR FROM CENTRAL AMERICA ----; AND BELIZE, AS A COLONY, IS A REDOUBT OF BRITISH COLONIALISM;
(2) THAT FOR HISTORIC AND GEOGRAPHIC REASONS BELIZE BELONGS TO GUATEMALA AND IT IS A NOBLE ASPIRATION OF THE GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE TO RECOVER ITS TERRITORY AND INCORPORATE IT ;
(3) THAT IT IS TO BE CONDEMNED THAT THE UK, IN ITS EAGERNESS TO MAINTAIN THE COLONIAL STATUS OF BELIZE, DEMONSTRATES ITS HOSTILITY BY REINFORCING ITS FLEET IN CENTRAL AMERICAN WATERS, INTENDING TO RETAIN BY FORCE WHAT IT CANNOT DO BY LAW;
(4) THAT THE REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR CANNOT REMAIN INDIFFERENT TO THE JUST ASPIRATIONS OF GUATEMALA ;
(RESOLVES:)

ART 1. TO GIVE ITS VOTE OF SUPPORT TO GUATEMALA IN ITS JUST ASPIRATION TO REINCORPORATE THE TERRITORY OF BELIZE UNDER GUATEMALAN SOVEREIGNTY.

ART 2. TO CONDEMN THE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF GREAT BRITAIN FOR INTENDING TO CONSERVE THIS COLONIAL VESTIGE IN CENTRAL AMERICA...

ART 3. TO MAKE KNOWN OUR SUPPORT TO THE GUATEMALA CONGRESS...

ART 4. TO CONDEMN BEFORE THE WORLD THE COLONIALIST ATTITUDE OF ENGLAND AND ITS ABUSE OF POWER....

ART 5. TO TRANSMIT THIS MOTION TO THE OTHER PARLIAMENTS OF AMERICA AND SOLICIT THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH GUATEMALA".

3. ALTHOUGH ALMOST ALL DEPUTIES FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE SIGNED THE RESOLUTION, ITS PASSAGE DID PROVOKE A SPIRITED EXCHANGE BETWEEN A COUPLE OF THE MORE EXTREME LEFTISTS AND THE PCN ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP. MARIO RODRIGUEZ INCLAN AND DAGOBERTO GUITIERREZ, BOTH OF THE COMMUNIST TAINTED UNION DEMOCRATIC NACIONAL (UDN) PARTY, ATTACKED THE RESOLUTION ON CONFIDENTIAL

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THE GROUNDS THAT IT COMPLETELY IGNORED THE ASPIRATIONS FOR SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE POPULATION OF BELIZE. BOTH SAID THE BELIZIANS WANT INDEPENDENCE, NOT ABSORPTION BY GUATEMALA. THE FIRST TO RESPOND WAS PCN DIRECTORY MEMBER MATIAS ROMERO. HIS ARGUMENT CONTAINED INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS WHEN HE CLAIMS THAT THE RESOLUTION AS PASSED WAS ONLY A CONDEMNATION OF UK COLONIAL-

ISM AND DID NOT GO INTO THE FUTURE STATUS OF THE TERRITORY, BUT THEN ADDED THAT "JURIDICALLY BELIZE IS PART OF GUATEMALA. WHEN THIS CONFUSION WAS NOTED BY GUTIERREZ, A SECOND MEMBER OF THE PCN LEADERSHIP, MAURICIO GUTIERREZ, CHARGED THAT HIS UDN COLLEAGUES WERE MERELY PURROTING THE LINE OF FIDEL CASTRO, WHO "EVERYONE KNOWS". IS THE LEAGUE WITH PRIME MINISTER PRICE TO PRODUCE AND INDEPENDENT BELIZE "SUBJECT TO THE SOVIET UNION BY WAY OF CUBA". AFTER THIS EXCHANGE, SEVERAL CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC DEPUTIES ROSE TO "CLARIFY" THEIR HAVING SIGNED THE RESOLUTION. THEY ESSENTIALLY SAID THAT THEY HAD SIGNED TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR "SOLIDARITY" WITH GUATEMALA, BUT THAT ON HEARING THE UDN CRITICISMS THEY NOW AGREED THAT THE EVENTUAL RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM RESTED WITH THE POPULATION OF BELIZE.

4. NOTWITHSTANDING THE OPINION SHIFTS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY FORTHWITH NAMED A BIPARTISAN COMMISSION OF DEPUTIES TO CARRY THE RESOLUTION TO GUATEMALAN PRESIDENT LAUGERUD. THE COMMISSION LEFT IMMEDIATELY TO COMPLETE ITS TASK.

5. COMMENT: IT MIGHT BE REVEALING TO COMPARE THIS RESOLUTION OF "SOLIDARITY" WITH A FELLOW LATIN COUNTRY WITH THE LAST SUCH EXAMPLE, THE ASSEMBLY'S EARLIER DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FOR PANAMA IN ITS EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE A NEW CANAL TREATY. WHEREAS THIS RESOLUTION STRONGLY CHASTIZED, BY NAME, THE UK AND SINGLED IT OUT AS THE COMPLETE VILLAIN, THE SOLIDARITY WITH PANAMA MOTION DID NOTHING MORE THAN EXPRESS THE ASSEMBLY'S HOPE THAT THE ISSUE WOULD BE RESOLVED FAVORABLY TO PANAMA. THE US WAS NOT MENTIONED AS THE CULPRIT.

6. THE UDN-PCN EXCHANGE, WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED GIVEN THE UDN'S POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS, WAS OBVIOUSLY PROLONGED BY THE RATHER INEPT AND CONFUSED GOVERNMENT DEFENSA OF THE MOTION. IT WAS APPARENT THAT THE RESOLUTION HAD BEEN COMPOSED IN HASTE, AND MIGHT HAVE BENEFITED BY NORMAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE, RATHER, THAN BEING PUSHED THROUGH FIRST, AND COMMENTED ON LATER.
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